

The original documents are located in Box 27, folder “National Security Council - Navy Fliers Downed in 1950” of the Philip Buchen Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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on January 17, 1955.

1,

(f) Noble was debriefed in Berlin before returning to this country, according to a State Department message of January 12, 1955 and told of having "talked to prisoners who had seen 8 of these fliers alive [those shot down in the Baltic in 1950] in an unspecified camp." On January 17, 1955 ^{Noble} he was interviewed in New York City by a Navy Intelligence officer, and identified Franz Zwetko, then in Austria, as the man who could identify the German Yugoslav who had told Noble the story of the eight Americans. Later in Washington on January 18, 1955, Noble gave a sworn deposition at the State Department, with exhaustive questions and answers, the transcript of which covers 34 pages, ^{and} part of which is quoted in item (d) above. Lastly on March 23, 1955, the FBI interviewed Noble in Detroit, and the interview report states in part:

Copy A

Included in ^{Noble's} ~~the~~ affidavit of May 26, 1973, part of which is quoted in item (c) above, is another statement, not ^{reflected} otherwise in any of the other supported by ~~the 1955~~ documentation, namely:

Copy B



3. Lack of substantiation for the evidence given by John Noble that ^{eight of} the flyers who crashed in 1950 survived and were imprisoned by the Soviets.

(a) In his 1973 affidavit, ^{Noble} identified the source for his only information about the flyers ^{as} a Yugoslav who had also been imprisoned by the Soviets, but ~~he~~ ^{he} placed the Yugoslav at Vorkuta and the time of the disclosure in 1950. In all of his statements given to U.S. authorities upon his release in 1955, Noble placed the Yugoslav ^{in Patma} at the only ~~instance~~ ^{instance} of any conversation between the two, ~~in Patma~~ and gave the time as being in 1954. When I talked recently to Noble he gave no satisfactory explanation for this discrepancy and said only that he ^{now} thought he ^{had} heard the same information both at Vorkuta in 1950 and at Patma in 1954. But this current recollection of ^{his} having received the same report at different times ^{and in separate locations} is clearly contradicted by Noble's fresher memories in 1955.

(b) No one else has ever confirmed to the U.S. government the information which Noble said he had obtained from the particular Yugoslav who told him of the eight flyers. ^{still alive in the Soviet Union,} The government ^{if} made an exhaustive inquiry in 1955 to see ^{if} it was possible to confirm the story. ~~Through interviews,~~ with Zwetko, ^{other} The ~~man~~ Yugoslav described by Noble as the sole source



for his information ^{about the flyers} was identified ^{by Zmetko (to whom Noble had directed the U.S. officials)} as one

then in West Berlin.

Wukowitsch, The latter was promptly

~~then~~ interviewed and stated he had no knowledge of any Navy internees in Russia, although he had in 1950 heard over a prison loudspeaker from a radio broadcast that an American aircraft had crossed the USSR border, that the U.S. had charged ~~the~~ Soviets with shooting it down, ~~the~~ and that the Soviets

had ~~were~~ denied the charge. One Franz Lesnik ^{had been} was a fellow-prisoner of Wukowitsch who

~~and he had~~ helped locate the ^{the U.S. officials} Wukowitsch ~~letter~~ in West Berlin, but

he also ~~could not~~ had no knowledge of ^{American} ~~the~~ prisoners taken from ~~the~~ U.S. aircraft.

Many other possible sources for confirming Noble's account were interviewed ^{in 1955} without

obtaining any confirmation. Among ^{were two} ~~among~~ them, the Americans, who had been with Noble in ^{Patma} Marchuk and Verdino, and

various ~~others~~ former prisoners of other nationalities.

(c) ^{As to the} ~~the~~ recollection of Noble in 1973

that he was told of photographic evidence possessed by Navy intelligence that the downed Navy aircraft



remained afloat and that Soviet vessel came alongside to pick up bodies and survivors, ^{it} is nowhere supported by any records. I have read the complete transcript of evidence taken by the Board of Investigation for the Navy, and no ~~such~~ reference appears to any such photographs. Moreover, the Navy's ~~attempted~~ search and rescue ^{flights (which proved futile)} operations were only begun during darkness in the ^{early} morning of April 9, 1950, some hours after the ^{downed} aircraft would have run out of fuel and twelve hours after the ^{time when the} Soviet ^{later} government said its aircraft had fired on the U.S. aircraft.

4. Recommendation

In response to John Milanowski's letter to you (which ^{along} with your memo of conversation is attached at Tab A) I recommend you authorize me to disclose to John the extent and results of my investigation into the matter. I think he would then agree that however sincere John Noble may be about what he ^{was told} ~~learned~~ while in Soviet prison camps, there is no evidence whatsoever ~~that~~ which substantiates the ^{account} ~~hearsay~~ given by John Noble and no basis for further investigation which could prove fruitful, especially in respect of an event dating back 25 years.

Brent Scowcroft concurs in this recommendation.
 Approve _____ Would like to discuss _____



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 18, 1976

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: BRENT SCOWCROFT
FROM: JAMES E. CONNOR *JEC*
SUBJECT: U.S. Navy Flyers Downed in 1950

The following notation was returned in the President's outbox today:

"John Milanowski, my former Administrative Assistant on Capitol Hill, former U.S. District Attorney, left me material awhile back on the missing U.S. plane crew from World War II.

He and a person named, Noble, I believe wanted to see Navy records on whether or not crew was picked up by Soviets.

Any information I can give him? He is calling me."

On June 10th you forwarded to this office a memorandum for the President on this subject. This memorandum was staffed to Phil Buchen for his comments and I understand that you and Phil have been discussing this matter.

Please coordinate action with Phil Buchen and inform us if the package should go forward as prepared on June 10.



cc: Dick Cheney
Phil Buchen

June 21, 1976

I spoke with John Milanowski this afternoon and informed him that you had received the "U.S. NAVY FLYERS" materials and that you would be in touch upon your return to the office.

I informed Jim Connor's office that you had had conversation with Mr. Milanowski.



June 21, 1976

I spoke with John Milanowski this afternoon and informed him that you had received the "U.S. NAVY FLYERS" materials and that you would be in touch upon your return to the office.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 18, 1976

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Please coordinate action with Phil Buchen and inform us if the package should go forward as prepared on June 10.

cc: Dick Cheney
Phil Buchen



6-25-76

GRPDS, Mi.

Mr. Buchen,

John P. Milanowski knows I am forwarding
this to you.

Ted Grevers

P.S. John H. Noble's "nearby" telephone is
Area 717 368-8534



Cp 322H4E/ely
Ser 001247P32

25 JAN 1954

Harry - ...

MEMORANDUM for Chairman, Interagency Priorities Committee

Subj: Intelligence collection request

1. ^{it} appears that the Soviets have salvaged the electronic equipment from an American aircraft. This may be the U. S. Navy PE4Y-2 which crashed in April 1950, in the Baltic.

2. In view of the successful salvaging and operation of the electronic equipment, there exists the possibility that some or all of the crew were taken into custody and are being held by the Soviets.

3. The crew members of the plane mentioned above were:

- John Henry FETTE, Lt., USNR, 0320676
- Howard William SEESCHAP, Lt., USN, 0264095
- Robert Durward REYNOLDS, Lt. (jg), USN, 0389950
- Edward Joseph PURCELL, CTE, USN, 2540438
- Jack William THOMAS, ADL, USN, 2242750
- Joe Henry DANWEN, JR., ADL, USN, 3635438
- Frank Lloyd BECKMAN, AT1, USN, 27990
- Joseph Jay BOURASSA, AL3, USN, 9539364

JAN 28 1954
6728115

4. It is requested that the necessary collection requirement be issued to determine whether any members of the crew were captured or taken into custody by the Soviets in order that diplomatic negotiations may be pursued to obtain their release.

REF USA 0306

G. G. FALLER
Captain, U. S. Navy
Navy Member



Orig by LCdr Collins
Op 322H4E, 72886
Typed 8 Jan 54, E. Yancey

*To be delivered by
hand, L. Cdr. Collins*

Sec M-2 05 (Op 322H4E)

*Orig and 1 reid: 25 Jan 54
E. Yancey*

Handwritten notes on left margin:
2H4
2H4E
A

AN APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

On April 8, 1950 a U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 (#59645) Privateer was fired upon near Libau, Latvia. Eight days later an inflated Life Raft from the missing aircraft was recovered from the Baltic Sea. A second MARK VII life raft (in a damaged and submerged condition) was recovered on April 21, 1950 by the Swedish Ship "Hittade". On April 25th, 1950 a Swedish fishing vessel recovered the nosewheel and strut of the missing craft which had become entangled in its seine, (Perpendicular net) about 37 miles west of Libau, Latvia.

On board were:

1. The Pilot, Lt. John N. Fette, USNR, Connellsville, Pennsylvania.
2. The Co-Pilot, Lt. Howard W. Seeschaf, USN, Fairlington, Virginia.
3. Lt. Jg. Robert D. Reynolds, USN, Danville, New York.
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7. AC3. Joseph J. Bourasa, USN, Linwood, Michigan.
8. AD1 Jack W. Thomas, USN, Stillwater, New Jersey.
9. AT1 Frank J. Beckham, USN, Newport, Kentucky.
10. CT3 Edward J. Purcell, USN, Southwestville, New Jersey.

No survivors or human remains were ever recovered from the sea.

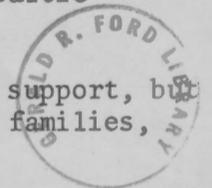
In September of 1950 a U.S. Citizen, John H. Noble of Muncy, Pennsylvania (Area 717 368-8534) arrived in the Soviet Siberian Prison camp of VORKUTA. Soon after his arrival he spoke with a Yugoslavian national prisoner who reported to Mr. Noble he had seen and spoken to American flyers who had been shot down in the Baltic Sea. He added that two of them had perished and eight had survived the crash in the sea, further they feared they would never see America their homeland as they had been told by Soviet officials their government assumed them dead.

About the same time another American citizen by the name of William T. Marchuk, of Norristown, Pennsylvania, (Area 215 631-1160) also imprisoned in VORKUTA. He reports inside the labor camp speaking to a Russian Tartar by the name of RUSIN who while in service to the Soviet fleet helped rescue the flyers out of the sea and subsequently MR. RUSIN was also arrested and sentenced to VORKUTA.

Both Mr. Noble and Mr. Marchuk were released from Soviet captivity in January of 1955 at West Berlin and they have told their story many times but I have only known about this tragedy for three years and now have completely exhausted every possible means to communicate what I believe is an unbelievable story of forgotten men...I ask you the American people to support me in making this information known to responsible American citizens who will DO SOMETHING about it.

Mr. Noble reports upon his return to Freedom in America he was informed by U.S. Naval Intelligence that they have photographic evidence of the PB4Y-2 afloat in the Baltic Sea and a Soviet trawler alongside.

Please help me end this tragedy. I need your ideas, suggestions, thoughts and support, but most of all your prayers to arrange for the return of these brave men to their families, friends and loved ones in America.



"MR. BREZHNEV..Let Our People Go!"

Theo. R. Grevers
The Fatman International Private Detective Service
6638 Cascade Road S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506
U.S.A.

Telephone (616) 949-1790

(Hebrews, Chapter 13, Verse 3)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: BILL HYLAND

FROM: PHIL BUCHEN *P.*

SUBJECT: Naval Flyers Downed in Soviet Waters in 1950

Attached is a flyer being distributed by the Fatman along with a copy of a Navy memo that was recently furnished by the Fatman to John Milanowski.

I do not recall that this memo was in the material previously furnished to you. Therefore, I suggest that the Navy check through on the results of the inquiry sought by that memo. At the same time, I am returning to you the full set of materials previously submitted by the Navy as requested by Denis Clift of your staff.

Attachments

Hold File

*7/8
memo
from
Hyland*



MILANOWSKI & MILANOWSKI
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Suite 601 Peoples Building
60-66 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

John P. Milanowski
Thomas A. Milanowski
James M. Milanowski

Wencel A. Milanowski
of Counsel

June 28, 1976

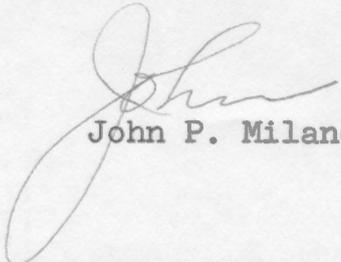
Mr. Philip W. Buchen
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Phil:

Enclosed find a memo which is self-explanatory. It was sent to me by Ted Grevers.

I hope you will see John Noble soon. If there is anything else you desire in the way of information, let me know.

Yours truly,



John P. Milanowski

JPM/cmm

Enclosure



6-25-76

GRPDS, Mi.

Mr. Buchen,

John P. Milanowski knows I am forwarding
this to you.

Ted Grevers

P.S. John H. Noble's "nearby" telephone is
Area 717 368-8534



Cp 322H4E/oly
Ser 001247P32

25 JAN 1954

Harry ...

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Subj: Intelligence collection request

1. It appears that the Soviets have salvaged the electronic equipment from an American aircraft carrier, the U. S. Navy, which crashed in April 1950, in the Baltic.

2. In view of the successful salvaging and operation of the electronic equipment, there exists the possibility that some or all of the crew were taken into custody and are being held by the Soviets.

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JAN 20 1954
001247P32

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CP 322H4E 0306

C. G. PALMER
Captain, U. S. Navy
Navy Member



Orig by LCdr Collins
Op 322H4E, 72886
Typed 8 Jan 54, E. Yancey

*To be delivered by
hand, L. Cdr. Collins*

Sec M-2 001247P32 (Op 322H4E)

*Orig and 1 recd: 25 Jan 54
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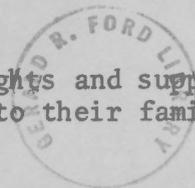
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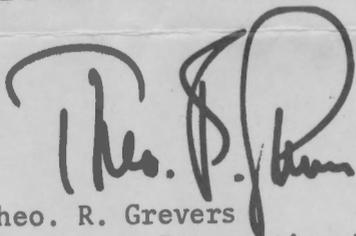
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(Hebrews, Chapter 13, Verse 3)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 25, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: WILLIAM HYLAND

FROM: PHIL BUCHEN 

SUBJECT: U. S. Navy Flyers Downed
in 1950

I have reviewed the file sent to you by Commander Zeller on May 14, 1976. Among the documents is a memorandum for Chief of Naval Operations (OP-009A) prepared in reference to (OP-009A) memorandum of 13 June 1973. This includes a summary of "retrievable holdings of this command". The copy of this memo which is in the file furnished to you is not complete and the summarized documents are not furnished. Therefore, I would like a copy of the memo without deletions and complete copies of the documents referred to which are only summarized in the memo.

With this information, I may be able to clear up some discrepancies which are evident in the documents furnished. One example is as follows:

The memo describes the interview with Noble on 17 January 1955 in which he requests the U. S. Government obtain from Franz Zwetko the name of a German Yugoslav who prior to his repatriation to Germany told Noble about the eight American aviators.

From the memo it appears that Zwetko was interviewed but it was not indicated that he was asked to identify the German Yugoslav mentioned by Noble.

Also, there are major discrepancies between the summary of interview with Noble on 17 January 1955 and his affidavit of 26 May 1973 which require



examining the full text of the interview report.

I would appreciate this information promptly as we must get an answer to the President regarding the latest efforts by John Milanowski to have the President become involved in this matter.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 30, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: BILL HYLAND

FROM: PHIL BUCHEN *P.*

SUBJECT: Naval Flyers Downed in Soviet Waters in 1950

Attached is a flyer being distributed by the Fatman along with a copy of a Navy memo that was recently furnished by the Fatman to John Milanowski.

I do not recall that this memo was in the material previously furnished to you. Therefore, I suggest that the Navy check through on the results of the inquiry sought by that memo. At the same time, I am returning to you the full set of materials previously submitted by the Navy as requested by Denis Clift of your staff.

Attachments



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 7, 1976

Phil Buchen -

The original of this memorandum
has been forwarded to the President.
This is for your information.

Jim Connor



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

INFORMATION
July 7, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

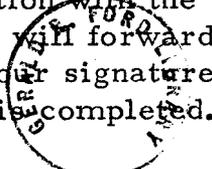
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT 
SUBJECT: U. S. Navy Flyers Downed in 1950

Pursuant to your request of May 10, 1976, members of your staff have been reviewing the facts of the crash of a U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 over the Baltic Sea on April 8, 1950 and the possibility that any of the U. S. crew might have survived and might now be in Soviet hands.

The very best information we have is that no members of the crew survived. They were declared dead by the Department of Defense in 1951. In response to our formal approaches down through the years, the Soviet Government has steadfastly maintained that they picked up no survivors and that they are holding no U. S. military personnel in the Soviet Union.

On April 7, 1976, John Milanowski provided you with materials he had received from Mr. John N. Noble and a private detective named Theodore Grevers -- "The Fatman" -- suggesting the possibility that at least some of the PB4Y crew might be alive and imprisoned in the Soviet Union. Both Mr. Noble and Mr. Grevers have been active on this issue in recent years. Mr. Noble bases his position with regard to the U. S. flyers on information he acquired while he was imprisoned in the USSR from 1945-1955. Under the Freedom of Information Act, Noble and Grevers acquired former Top Secret documents on the PB4Y's mission and fate from the Department of Defense -- documents which they suggest substantiate their claim that the U. S. crew might still be alive. We have reviewed many of the documents in question, and there is no firm evidence that would seem to support the position taken by Mr. Noble and Mr. Grevers.

I reported the results of our review to you in a memorandum of June 10. Because there are unanswered questions in the written record however, Phil Buchen asked for a delay in submitting the memo to you in order to seek additional evidence from Defense and to confirm conclusively that no avenue had been left unexplored. We have worked with Phil to assure an exhaustive search of Defense records, in the hope of clarifying ambiguities in the information reviewed thus far. At the same time, Phil has been in touch with John Milanowski, who has expressed his satisfaction with the attention being given by the White House to this matter. We will forward our complete findings, together with a proposed letter for your signature to John Milanowski, as soon as our review of the documents is completed.



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 24, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Backup material in the U.S. Navy
Flyers case was returned to
Bill Hyland's office today.

shirley key



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET

July 8, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR PHILIP BUCHEN

FROM: William G. Hyland *WGH*

SUBJECT: U. S. Navy Flyers Downed in 1950

Acting on your recent request for additional information relating to the U. S. Navy flyers downed over the Baltic in 1950, we have obtained and are forwarding the documents at Tab A. (Note: These documents have not yet been released to the public and retain the classification shown on each.)

The original set of documents is at Tab B.

Returned 9/24/76

*Enclosure dated 6 July 76,
from Captain L. E. Connel, U.S. Navy,
for CDR. L. W. PALMER)*

J. Key

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL
OF CLASSIFIED ATTACHMENTS

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: PHILIP BUCHEN *P.*

SUBJECT: Evidence on U. S. Navy Flyers Downed in 1950

1. Circumstances of the disappearance of the flyers (from findings made by Secretary of the Navy on April 11, 1951 after inquiry and report by Board of Investigation).

At 10:51 AM on 8 April 1950, ten officers and enlisted men took off from U.S. Air Force Base, Wiesbaden, Germany, in a U.S. Navy Aircraft PB4Y-2. Subsequent events, as found by the Secretary were:

Subsequent to its departure communications were received from the subject aircraft up to 1:55 PM (Z) on 6 April. Since the aircraft had fuel aboard sufficient to last until approximately 11:00 PM (Z) on 8 April, it was not officially declared missing until that time. However, search and rescue aircraft were alerted at 10:45 PM (Z) on that date. The first search and rescue airplane took off from Wiesbaden at 2:40 AM on 9 April, followed quickly by others and a total of 26 aircraft were engaged in the search and rescue operations. On 16 April 1950, search and rescue operations were suspended at sundown with negative results. However, a British merchant ship Mc.CHLAND on 14 April picked up a Mark VII life raft at location 56-20N 20-06E which was positively identified as belonging to the missing aircraft. On 23 April 1950, the Swedish ship HITTAGEN also picked up a Mark VII life raft in a reported position of 56-10N 19-05E which was positively identified as belonging to the missing aircraft.

Immediately following the failure of the aircraft to return to Wiesbaden, the Soviet Government addressed a note to the United States Government stating that a U.S. aircraft was encountered and fired upon by Soviet fighter aircraft at approximately 2:30 PM (Z) on 8 April in the vicinity of overland at Laben, Latvia.



However, it was the opinion of the Board of Investigation that by reconstruction of the scheduled flight plan of the aircraft, it was most improbable that the aircraft would have been overland at the time of the Soviet strike but it was possible that due to radar failure and weather change, the plane could have flown into Soviet held territory without knowing it. Based on the positions of the life rafts when recovered, by reconstruction of average daily surface winds and currents in the Baltic during the period of the elapsed time from the assumed time of the loss of the aircraft to the time of the recovery of each raft, and assuming certain sailing characterization of the rafts, an average mean position of Latitude 55° 19' N Longitude 18° 45 E was computed as being the geographical point where the loss of the aircraft occurred. This then would place the aircraft over the waters of the Baltic Sea.

2. Arrest, Incarceration, and Release of John H. Noble, a U. S. citizen, by the USSR.

- (a) Arrested in Dresden, East Germany, on July 5, 1945.
- (b) Held in East German prisons and concentration camps until August 1950.
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"Shortly after my arrival I spoke with a Yugoslavian National in Camp Number Three who told me several months before an American Navy Reconnaissance plane had been downed by the Soviets over the Baltic Sea and that eight of the ten crew members had survived.

"The eight survivors were being held in the Vorkuta area but most important was all survivors had been declared dead and they had been told by the Soviet officials the United States Government had accepted this statement and therefore they may just as well forget about ever going back to America.



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"The Yugoslavian national told me they feared they would never see their homeland again.

"During my stay I was never able to identify the survivors by name, however, I heard repeatedly from other Nationals being transferred from one camp to another that American's were being held where these transferre's [sic] came from."

- (d) On June 10, 1954, Noble first met William Marchuk and William Verdine, who were also U.S. citizens, and on June 30, 1954, all three arrived at a repatriation camp in Potma. In a sworn deposition given by Noble on January 18, 1955, he stated:

" . . . On the 30th of June, 1954, immediately after I arrived in the Camp of Potma, I was sitting on the bench in the park with either Verdine or Marchuk -- I don't remember exactly -- I was told by a German Yugoslav that he had met eight American flyers which claimed to have been shot down over the Baltic Sea. . . .

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"One of them I think I have here: Franz Zvetko.. . .

"He was together with these Yugoslavs for more than a year . . . so most likely he knows the name of this person. . . .

"I did not take opportunity to speak with this fellow later on, because I was warned by several people in the Camp that this person was working in connection with the Soviet authorities."

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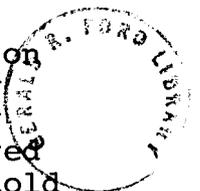
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"While in Camp Potma about January 2, 1955 [sic], awaiting release he talked to FNU WUKOWITSCH, who stated he had seen the eight Americans (believed to refer to the eight lost in a plane accident), and talked with them and they expressed to him their fear that they would be "lost" in the Soviet Union because they had been officially pronounced dead by the Russian Government."

Included in Noble's affidavit of May 26, 1973, part of which is quoted in item (c) above, is another statement, not reflected in any of the other documentation, namely:

"After my arrival in Washington, D. C. on January 17, 1955, I was interviewed by Naval Intelligence primarily regarding the downed American Navy fliers referred to earlier in this statement. I was told by my interrogators that they did have photographic evidence to the fact the



plane was afloat for some time after the crash and a Soviet vessel did come alongside to pick-up the survivors and/or the bodies.

"Due to the fact the plane was afloat gave reason to believe there are survivors which verified to me the existence of the American's [sic] inside Vorkuta."

3. Lack of substantiation for the evidence given by John Noble that eight of the flyers who crashed in 1950 survived and were imprisoned by the Soviets.

- (a) In his 1973 affidavit Noble identified the source for his only information about the flyers as a Yugoslav who had also been imprisoned by the Soviets, but he placed the Yugoslav at Vorkuta and the time of the disclosure in 1950. In all of his statements given to U. S. authorities upon his release in 1955, Noble placed the Yugoslav in Potma at the only instance of any conversation between the two and gave the time as being in 1954. When I talked recently to Noble he gave no satisfactory explanation for this discrepancy and said only that he now thought he had heard the same information both at Vorkuta in 1950 and at Potma in 1954. But this current recollection of his having received the same report at different times and in separate locations is clearly contradicted by Noble's fresher memories in 1955.
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he had in 1950 heard over a prison loudspeaker from a radio broadcast that an American aircraft had crossed the USSR border, that the U.S. had charged the Soviets with shooting it down, and that the Soviets had denied the charge. One Franz Lesnik had been a fellow prisoner of Wukowitsch who helped the U. S. officials locate Wukowitsch in West Berlin, but he also had no knowledge of American prisoners taken from a U. S. aircraft. Many other possible sources for confirming Noble's account were interviewed in 1955 without obtaining any confirmation or additional clues. Among them were the two Americans who had been with Noble in Potma -- Marchuk and Verdine -- and various former prisoners of other nationalities.

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4. Recommendation

In response to the information supplied you by John along with your memo of conversation attached at TAB A, I recommend you authorize me to disclose to John the extent and results of my investigation into the matter. I think he would then agree that, however sincere John Noble may be about what he was told while in Soviet prison camps, there is no evidence whatsoever which substantiates the hearsay account given by Noble and no basis for further investigation which could prove fruitful, especially in respect of an event dating back 25 years.

Brent Scowcroft concurs in this recommendation.

APPROVE _____

WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS _____



TAB
A



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

5/10/76

Brent Sweroff

John Melanowski gave me this. He had a 5 hour interview with John Noble & is impressed by him.

The so-called detective is not reliable so discount him.

John M. tells me that John Noble got from the Navy, under the Freedom of Information Act, documents that indicate the Navy aircraft crew could have survived & been picked up by the Soviets.

Get me all the facts.



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6638 CASCADE ROAD S. E.
GRAND RAPIDS
MICHIGAN
49506

April 7, 1976

Mr. John P. Milanowski
Attorney & Counsellor at Law
Milanowski & Milanowski
Suite 601
People's Building
Grand Rapids
Michigan
49502

Dear John,

Enclosed find some of the materials I promised you relative the Us. Navy fliers in VORKUTA.

I telephoned John H. Noble after your visit with me last Monday. He returned my call last evening and agreed to be in Grand Rapids sometime during the afternoon of Tuesday, April 13, 1976, so he could speak with you personally.

If this is agreeable, I would appreciate hearing from you so I may confirm with him.

Please let me know where you would like to speak with John. He likely will be my guest at my Grand Rapids home.

(continued on next page)

Gathering Truth

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☆ Miami, Florida ☆ Los Angeles, California ☆ San Francisco, California
☆ Zurich, Switzerland ☆ London, England ☆ Tokyo, Japan ☆ Hong Kong ☆ East European Sources



European Address

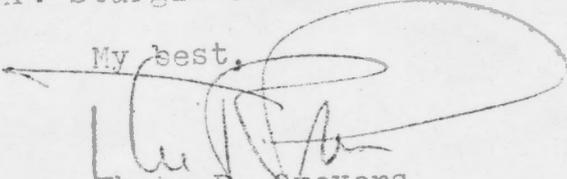
Postbus 39, Wassenaar, The Netherlands, Europe
Telephone Netnummer 0 1751 Wassenaar 2892
Cable Address, FATMAN Wassenaar, Holland



Page Two
Mr. John P. Milanowski
April 7, 1976

If you like possibly you would like to have
Mr. Sturgis or Mr. Campbell present.

My best.



Theo. R. Grevers

"The Fatman"

The Fatman International Private Detective Service
Grand Rapids Office

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SVP; Enclosures



MILANOWSKI & MILANOWSKI
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Suite 601 Peoples Building
60-66 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

John P. Milanowski
Thomas A. Milanowski
James M. Milanowski

July 22, 1976

President Gerald R. Ford
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Jerry:

After our conversation last Friday, July 16, 1976, I have been mulling over the things we discussed. I am tremendously concerned about the election and how Watergate will affect your success. I am convinced more than ever that any ties you make to the Nixon Administration is very negative and will hurt your success. As an example, this morning a personal friend stopped me on the street and wanted to know how you could appoint a former Nixon aide to the Post of Director of Communication or whatever it was that he was appointed to. Then this morning in the Detroit Free Press the Question asked in Sound Off was, "After the Watergate scandal was mentioned by Democratic vice-presidential candidate Walter Mondale at last week's convention, President Ford dared the Democrats to rekindle the issue. Will Watergate influence your vote?" The percentage was definitely yes.

What I am trying to say is that you must divorce yourself in every way possible from the former Nixon Administration. I say this because I am so convinced that it is indeed an issue in the minds of many people.

I am still not satisfied with the answer we received in reference to the Navy Flyers. I believe we should send a note to Mr. Bresznov informing him that we have information that makes us believe that eight of the flyers we lost are still alive and in Russian prisons. Who knows, we may receive an answer as we did in the John Noble case where President Eisenhower made his inquiry. I appreciate the problem of Intelligence sensitivity. If they were on a spy mission, why



July 22, 1976

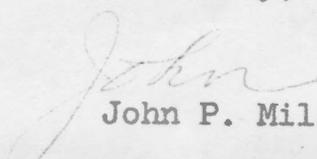
not admit same as Eisenhower did to get the freedom of our flyer Powers; I believe that is his name.

Another matter as I look down the road to the general election in November. Some how you have to take advantage of your home-town, Grand Rapids, Michigan. People like the idea that a President will hang on to the place where he was raised. The best example of this is Jimmy Carter who is now using this kind of approach at Plains, Georgia. I know it is difficult because you do not have a living residence here, but I believe it is something that you should consider in the total picture of political consideration. Perhaps a visit to Boyne Mountain would give the home-town flavor I am talking about.

The single most important issue facing American Catholics is the Right to Life matter. Your position is sound, but you should articulate the fact that you're in favor of a Constitutional Amendment. You may have to consider a Catholic for vice-president.

Needless to say, you know my only interest in writing is to seek your re-election in November. Best wishes to Betty and the children.

Sincerely,



John P. Milanowski

JPM/cmm

P.S. Nothing doing on the invitation of Reagan to debate. I would ignore same. From my view his challenge is an admission of defeat on the delegate issue.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 12, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

PHILIP BUCHEN *P.*

SUBJECT:

Evidence on U. S. Navy Flyers Downed in 1950

1. Circumstances of the disappearance of the flyers (from findings made by Secretary of the Navy on April 11, 1951 after inquiry and report by Board of Investigation).

At 10:51 AM on 8 April 1950, ten officers and enlisted men took off from U.S. Air Force Base, Wiesbaden, Germany, in a U.S. Navy Aircraft PB4Y-2. Subsequent events, as found by the Secretary were:

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However, it was the opinion of the Board of Investigation that by reconstruction of the scheduled flight plan of the aircraft, it was most improbable that the aircraft would have been overland at the time of the Soviet strike but it was possible that due to radar failure and weather change, the plane could have flown into Soviet held territory without knowing it. Based on the positions of the life rafts when recovered, by reconstruction of average daily surface winds and currents in the Baltic during the period of the elapsed time from the assumed time of the loss of the aircraft to the time of the recovery of each raft, and assuming certain sailing characterization of the rafts, an average mean position of Latitude 55° 19' N Longitude 18° 45 E was computed as being the geographical point where the loss of the aircraft occurred. This then would place the aircraft over the waters of the Baltic Sea.

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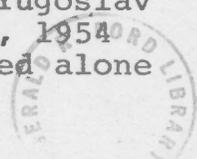
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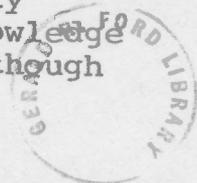


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Brent Scowcroft concurs in this recommendation.

APPROVE _____

WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS _____



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

5/10/76

Brent Scowcroft

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The so-called detective is not reliable so discount him.

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Get me all the facts.



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6638 CASCADE ROAD S. E.
GRAND RAPIDS
MICHIGAN
49506

April 7, 1976

Mr. John P. Milanowski
Attorney & Counsellor at Law
Milanowski & Milanowski
Suite 601
People's Building
Grand Rapids
Michigan
49502

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(continued on next page)

Gathering Truth

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★ Miami, Florida ★ Los Angeles, California ★ San Francisco, California
★ Zurich, Switzerland ★ London, England ★ Tokyo, Japan ★ Hong Kong ★ East European Sources



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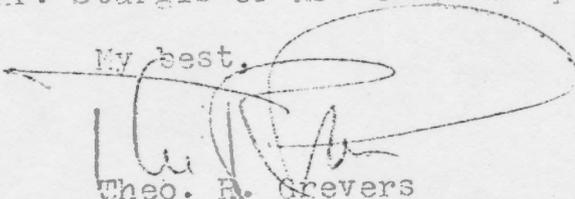
Postbus 39, Wassenaar, The Netherlands, Europe
Telephone Netnummer 0 1751 Wassenaar 2892
Cable Address, FATMAN Wassenaar, Holland



Page Two
Mr. John F. Milanowski
April 7, 1976

If you like possibly you would like to have
Mr. Sturgis or Mr. Campbell present.

My best,



Theo. R. Grevers

"The Fatman"

The Fatman International Private Detective Service
Grand Rapids Office

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6638 CASCADE ROAD S.
GRAND RAPIDS
MICHIGAN
49506

May 25, 1973

Richard M. Nixon
The President of The United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C.
20000

COPY

Dear President Nixon,

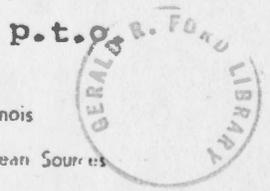
I believe there are American Military
Naval Personnel in Vorkuta, a Russian Arctic
Prison Camp.

They are:

1. Lt. John H. Fette USNR The Pilot
2. Lt. Howard W. Seeschaf USN The Co-Pilot
3. LTJG Robert D. Reynolds USN
4. ENS Tommy L. Burgess USN
5. AD1 Joe H. Danens Jr. USN
6. AT3 Joseph N. Rinnier USN
7. AC3 Joseph J. Bouraas USN
8. AD1 Jack W. Thomas USN
9. AT1 Frank L. Beckham USN
10. CT3 Edward J. Purcell USN

Gathering Truth

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European Address

Postbus 39, Wassenaar, The Netherlands, Europe
Telephone Nenummer 0 1751 Wassenaar 2892
Cable Address FATMAN Wassenaar, Holland

Page Two
May 25, 1973
Richard M. Nixon

On April 8, 1950 a Navy PB4Y-2 departed Weisbaden, West Germany Air Force Base with the above crew.

Including the Pilot Lt. John H. Fette ten persons were aboard.

The flight failed to return from the Baltic Sea and a search of one week produced debris in a 50 degrees radius of 59 degrees 19 minutes north and 18 degrees 45 minutes east.

No bodies were ever recovered from the scene.

I refer you to the enclosed sworn affidavit of Mr. John Noble.

The question remains, and this is what haunts me and has given me many sleepless nights. Why did rumors of captured American Naval personnel prevail in Vorkuta unless there is some measure of truth to them? Further, such rumors could not conceivably start in this remote area unless there is some basis.

My interest is humanitarian. I have no personal motivation except I wish for you to know what I believe to be true and for our men to come home. I am not being paid nor have I been retained by anyone.

I am 43 years of age and have been a Private Detective since 1951. I have been a lifelong Republican and a precinct worker in Battle Creek, Michigan, and a delegate to the Michigan Convention in 1960 that nominated you for the Presidency.

I have an indomitable faith in you to accomplish the impossible but somehow I have a very deep feeling our countrymen are there and that they feel very much alone and forgotten.

I understand there may well be over two million Political, Criminal and Religious prisoners in the U.S.S.R., Is it possible present Soviet leaders simply are not aware of these tragic circumstances?

p.t.o.



Page Three
May 25, 1973
Richard M. Nixon

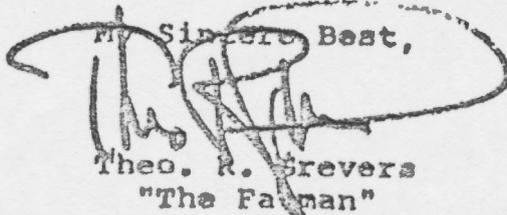
Could you make an earnest appeal to Mr. Brezhnev for his sincere interest and co-operation to once and for all resolve the issue of American citizens in Soviet Camps and Prisons?

Is it conceivable an American Mercy team could visit Vorkuta and other camps for the specific purpose of locating American citizens and Military Service personnel and could Mr. Noble and I be part of such a mission.

There certainly is no earthly purpose in keeping these men there and they belong home with us.

Thank you Mr. President !

Mr. Sincerely Best,



Theo. R. Grevers
"The Fatman"

The Fatman International Private Detective Service
Grand Rapids Office

TRG/jmh

Enclosure: Affidavit of Mr. John Noble



INVESTIGATION POINTS OF INTEREST

When John H. Noble and his Father, Charles Noble were arrested July 5, 1945 in Dresden, East Germany U.S. State Department Officials received word from his Mother who later escaped to the West. U.S. State Department Officials then requested their release.

The Russians simply denied having them.

Over nine years later Mr. Noble was able to get a Post Card to a friend in Germany. This oddly written card utilizing a subterfuge was forwarded to his Mother and Father in Detroit, Michigan. (His Father had been released on July 4th, 1952.)

In January 1955 he forwarded another Post Card to an Aunt in Germany. This card also was forwarded to his parents in the U.S.A.

The late Congressman Alvin F. Bentley (who prior his election in 1952) was a U.S. State Department Foreign Service Officer and an official American observer at the infamous trial of Josef Cardinal Mindzenty in Hungary) agreed to look into the matter. (The Post Cards bearing proof Mr. Noble was alive.)

I understand the Russians did not reply to U.S. State Department requests for information.

Several of these U.S. Department requests were coupled with news releases by Congressman Bentley, all to no avail.

After Congressman Bentley recovered from the Puerto Rican Terrorist attack he made a personal visit to President Eisenhower and I understand the White House forwarded a personal note to the Russian Government and by June 10th, 1954 the process of release from Vorkuta for Mr. Noble was started.

Mr. Noble reports to me a United States Investigatory Body visited all East European Iron Curtain Nations in early 1951 and determined there were 5009 American citizens in Communist jails at this time.

SUMMARY OPINION: I believe the only way our Navy Eliers and other Americans will be released is if you as Our President demand it.



AFFIDAVIT

I, John H. Noble, an American citizen, hereby submit the following sworn affidavit to RICHARD M. NIXON, President of The United States.

I was arrested by the Soviet MVD in Dresden, East Germany on July 5, 1945 and was imprisoned in East Germany for 14 months.

I was subsequently transferred to two concentration camps, the first being Muehlberg and then to Buchenwald.

After receiving my sentence at Weimar Prison on August 10, 1950, in East Germany I was transferred by rail to Poland and the Ukraine over Moscow to the Vorkuta Arctic Slave Camp.

I arrived there in September of 1950.

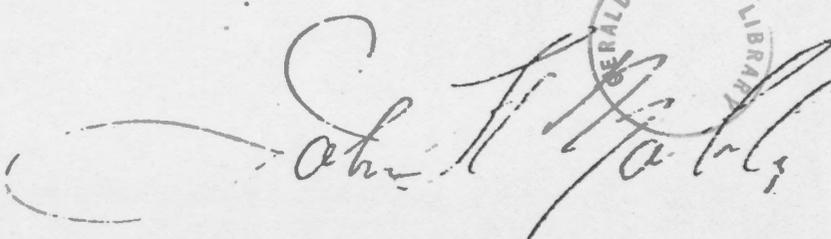
Shortly after my arrival I spoke with a Yugoslavian National in Camp Number Three who told me several months before an American Navy Reconnaissance plane had been downed by the Soviets over the Baltic Sea and that eight of the ten crew members had survived.

The eight survivors were being held in the Vorkuta area but most important was all survivors had been declared dead and they had been told by the Soviet officials the United States Government had accepted this statement and therefore they may just as well forget about ever going back to America.

The Yugoslavian national told me they feared they would never see their homeland again.

During my stay I was never able to identify the survivors by name, however, I heard repeatedly from other Nationals being transferred from one camp to another that American's were being held where these transferre's came from.

It was obvious too, Soviets deliberately did not permit more than two or three American's to be held in the same camp. I believe this had a demoralizing effect on other nationals seeing the Soviets could get away with it.


GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

PAGE TWO

RICHARD M. NIXON

While imprisoned, I did hear from time to time of one special camp near Archangel where approximately three hundred Americans were held. To the best of my knowledge most of these were P.O.W.'s captured in East Germany during World War II

During my entire imprisonment I personally had contact with three American citizens while seeing written evidence of two others.

1. An O'Conner in a Dresden, East German prison
2. Inscribed in the wall of Krasnia - Prest Prison in Moscow the name of Major Roberts or Robbins with his American address and the inscription...
"I am sick and don't expect to live through this..."

At the Potma Prison outside Moscow I became befriended with a German who had shared his cell with U.S. Corespondent Al Dulgan in the Lubianka Prison in Moscow as late as 1953. Al Dulgan told him he had been declared dead by the Soviets possibly in 1948 and was anxious to get word out he was still alive.

When I was released by the Soviets and arrived in West Berlin on January 8, 1955, I was interviewed at length by the U.S. State Department officials and a few days later asked to appear at a news conference. It was during this news conference I was told to avoid answering any questions on two subjects:

1. The number of Americans held by the Soviets.
2. The development of Soviet Atomic Energy.

After my arrival in Washington, D. C. on January 17, 1955, I was interviewed by Naval Intelligence primarily regarding the downed American Navy fliers referred to earlier in this statement. I was told by my interrogators that they did have photographic evidence to the fact the plane was afloat for some time after the crash and a Soviet vessel did come alongside to pick-up the survivors and/or the bodies.

Due to the fact the plane was afloat gave reason to believe there are survivors which verified to me the existence of the American's inside Vorkuta.



John H. Mahoney

PAGE THREE

RICHARD M. NIXON

Later on during the interviews at the Soviet desk of the U.S. State Department, I was shown reports of American citizens still in Soviet prisons and information the U.S. State Department had received from other Nationals released from Soviet prison camps. I was asked to check this list to determine if I could identify any of the names.

This list totaled approximately 700 names.

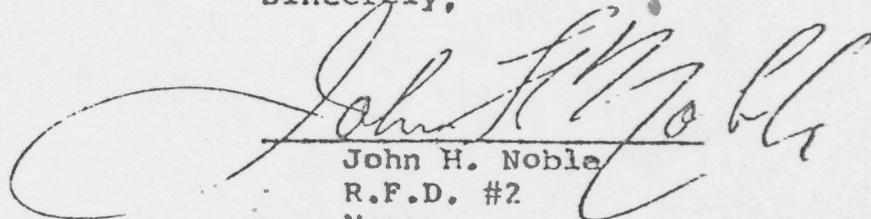
Several years ago during a briefing at the U.S. State Department in presence of thirty or forty persons in Washington D. C., I raised the question regarding the Americans held by Soviets because the briefer stated CONSULAR agreements would prevent Americans from being unduly detained by the Soviets.

At first the gentlemen did not directly answer the question and became quite evasive, but after pressing the issue he stated he was aware of this problem but felt the citizenship question would first have to be cleared up. I assumed he was referring to captive American G I's who may have been of foreign origin and the Soviets, of course, place more emphasis on nationality than citizenship.

Having personally lived through these kind of experiences and hardships for almost ten years I would like to do what I can to communicate this information to you, Mr. President, in order those Americans still live in Soviet prisons today can once again receive their freedom.

In this time of negotiation with Soviet officials I feel a vital issue such as this would have paramount consideration.

Sincerely,



John H. Noble
R.F.D. #2
Muncy
Pennsylvania
17756

Telephone Area 717 546-6059



PAGE FOUR

RICHARD M. NIXON

STATE OF Michigan

COUNTY OF Kent SS

On this 26 day of May 1973
before me a NOTARY PUBLIC in and for said County and State,
personally appeared Robert Galt who in the
foregoing Affidavit did depose and say that he has read the
foregoing Affidavit and that he did execute said Affidavit
as his free act and deed for the purpose therein set forth.

S E A L

Gerrit Baker Notary Public
County of Kent
State of Michigan
My Commission Expires 19

GERRIT BAKER
Notary Public, Kent County, Michigan
My Commission Expires Oct. 7, 1979



Reasons why the U.S. Navy Fliers survived.....

One inflated life raft positively identified as having come from the downed PB4Y-2 was recovered in the Baltic Sea on April 16, 1950.

Another Park VII life raft was recovered from the Baltic Sea in a damaged and deflated condition on April 21, 1950.

On April 25, 1950, a Swedish fishing vessel, the "Pitade", recovered the rosewheel and strut positively identified as coming from the downed PB4Y-2, in its fishing net about 37 miles offshore of Libau, Latvia.

No survivors or human remains were ever recovered from the sea after an attempted rescue effort quoted by some European newspapers as "reminiscent of a war game exercise...."

The arrival of American citizen JOHN H. NOBLE in the Soviet Siberian prison camp of VORKUTA in September of 1950 and his subsequent talk with an imprisoned Yugoslavian National indicating he had spoken to eight of Noble's countrymen who had been shot down in the Baltic Sea and that they feared they would never see their homeland again as the American Government had reported and accepted the fact that they were dead. Two of the fliers reportedly did not survive the crash in the Baltic.

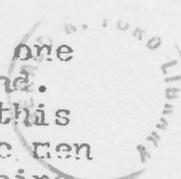
The reports of another American Citizen by the name of WILLIAM T. LARCHUK, who also was imprisoned in VORKUTA during this time and his discussion with a Russian Tartar by the name of RUSIN, who reported to him he was employed by the Soviet fleet that helped rescue the fliers out of the water into a Russian trawler.

Reports from JOHN H. NOBLE that upon his return to freedom in January of 1955, he was informed by a U.S. Naval Intelligence Officer in Washington D.C., at Naval Intelligence Headquarters, that our government had photographs of the PB4Y-2 afloat in the Baltic Sea and a Russian trawler alongside.

It is significant, the Yugoslavian National prisoner who spoke to Mr. Noble, referred to ten fliers, not seven or nine, but ten. He added that two had perished and eight survived. The PB4Y-2 crew totaled ten.

The U.S. Navy Fliers are still relatively young men and because of this could have survived their years of imprisonment.

Statements have been made the men did not survive and one year after the crash they were officially declared dead. Factually, there is more evidence that they survived this crash. No fact has ever come to my attention that the men indeed perished in the Baltic, nor that any human remains were ever found.



MILANOWSKI & MILANOWSKI
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Suite 601 Peoples Building
60-66 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

John P. Milanowski
Thomas A. Milanowski
James M. Milanowski

July 22, 1976

President Gerald R. Ford
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Jerry:

After our conversation last Friday, July 16, 1976, I have been mulling over the things we discussed. I am tremendously concerned about the election and how Watergate will affect your success. I am convinced more than ever that any ties you make to the Nixon Administration is very negative and will hurt your success. As an example, this morning a personal friend stopped me on the street and wanted to know how you could appoint a former Nixon aide to the Post of Director of Communication or whatever it was that he was appointed to. Then this morning in the Detroit Free Press the Question asked in Sound Off was, "After the Watergate scandal was mentioned by Democratic vice-presidential candidate Walter Mondale at last week's convention, President Ford dared the Democrats to rekindle the issue. Will Watergate influence your vote?" The precentage was definitely yes.

What I am trying to say is that you must divorce yourself in every way possible from the former Nixon Administration. I say this because I am so convinced that it is indeed an issue in the minds of many people.

I am still not satisfied with the answer we received in reference to the Navy Flyers. I believe we should send a note to Mr. Bresznov informing him that we have information that makes us believe that eight of the flyers we lost are still alive and in Russian prisons. Who knows, we may receive an answer as we did in the John Noble case where President Eisenhower made his inquiry. I appreciate the problem of Intelligence sensitivity. If they were on a spy mission, why



July 22, 1976

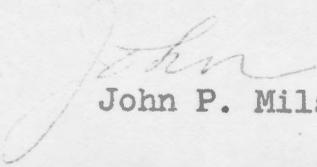
not admit same as Eisenhower did to get the freedom of our flyer Powers; I believe that is his name.

Another matter as I look down the road to the general election in November. Some how you have to take advantage of your home-town, Grand Rapids, Michigan. People like the idea that a President will hang on to the place where he was raised. The best example of this is Jimmy Carter who is now using this kind of approach at Plains, Georgia. I know it is difficult because you do not have a living residence here, but I believe it is something that you should consider in the total picture of political consideration. Perhaps a visit to Boyne Mountain would give the home-town flavor I am talking about.

The single most important issue facing American Catholics is the Right to Life matter. Your position is sound, but you should articulate the fact that you're in favor of a Constitutional Amendment. You may have to consider a Catholic for vice-president.

Needless to say, you know my only interest in writing is to seek your re-election in November. Best wishes to Betty and the children.

Sincerely,



John P. Milanowski

JPM/cmm

P.S. Nothing doing on the invitation of Reagan to debate. I would ignore same. From my view his challenge is an admission of defeat on the delegate issue.



11/2/76

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Checked with
Central Files
to see if the
President
sent a letter
to Milanowski

see attached



MILANOWSKI, JOHN P.

COPY

EXECUTIVE

[Handwritten signature]

July 29, 1976

Dear John,

Many thanks for following up on our recent conversation. As always in the past, it is helpful to me to have your advice which I will keep in mind as plans and decisions are made in the days ahead.

With warm personal regards, in which Betty joins,

Sincerely,

JERRY FORD

Mr. John P. Milanowski
Suite 601 Peoples Building
60-66 Monroe Avenue N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

GRF:dkc

33 - Parent Conversation

RECEIVED
JUL 31 1976
CENTRAL FILES



ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Suite 601 Peoples Building
60-66 Monroe Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49502

John P. Milanowski
Thomas A. Milanowski
James M. Milanowski

July 22, 1976

President, Gerald R. Ford
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

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July 22, 1976

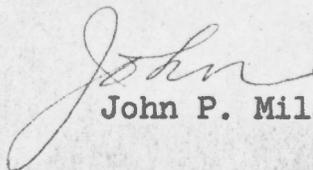
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The single most important issue facing American Catholics is the Right to Life matter. Your position is sound, but you should articulate the fact that you're in favor of a Constitutional Amendment. You may have to consider a Catholic for vice-president.

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Sincerely,



John P. Milanowski

JPM/cmm

P.S. Nothing doing on the invitation of Reagan to debate. I would ignore same. From my view his challenge is an admission of defeat on the delegate issue.



8/13/76

Robert Gates of NSC
said they have received a letter from
someone else about the same matter
that John Milanowski had written and
he wanted a copy of Mr. Buchen's
letter so they could send a similar
letter.

5646

Checked with Mr. Buchen and he said
he had talked on the phone with
Milanowski and that he sent a memo
to the President, which Mr. Gates could
come up and read. (Mr. Gates did so.)

We don't know if the President has seen
our memo -- it was in Scowcroft's office
for quite a while -- Mr. Buchen said.

Mr. Gates said he would check on it.



NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

8/16

*Navy Glycer
Downed*

Eva:

In keeping with our conversation last week about Mr. Milanowski and the 1950 Baltic Sea incident, I am forwarding our proposed reply to Mrs. Joseph Perrou on the same subject. Mrs. Perrou's brother was lost in the incident. She apparently is working with Mr. Theodore Grevers of the "Fatman International Detective Service" in an attempt to locate her brother in the USSR.

I have attached Mrs. Perrou's letter. The proposed reply would be signed by Roland Elliott. Could we have Mr. Buchen's clearance? Thank you.

Robert Gates
Robert Gates
x5646

*Return with
attached comments*
1.



PROPOSED REPLY

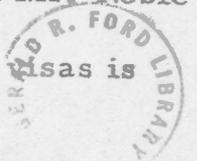
Dear Mrs. Perrou:

The President has asked me to thank you for your letter of July 5 concerning your brother, Joseph Bourassa, and the possibility that he and others have survived the crash of their plane in the Baltic Sea in 1950.

We can appreciate your and your mother's desire for definite word on the fate of your brother and wish it were in our power to provide this. However, all investigations by this Government through the past 26 years have produced no evidence that any of the crew survived or were captured. In addition to our direct investigations, we have formally and repeatedly asked the Soviet Government for information regarding your brother and his crew and other U.S. airmen lost under circumstances where they possibly could have survived and been imprisoned. The Soviet Union has denied holding any of these men, and we believe it is highly unlikely that American citizens could have been imprisoned in the USSR for long periods without our learning of it.

I am advised that the Department of State has had extensive correspondence on this subject with Mr. Grevers of the "Fatman International Detective Service." *He has been told that all leads by persons claiming to have information about the crew of the plane which crashed in 1950 have been pursued but without any positive results.* ~~All leads provided by him, and by other persons claiming to have information about the 1950 incident, have been followed up, again without any positive results.~~

With respect to your request for visas for Mr. Grevers and Mr. Noble to visit the Soviet Union to locate the crew, the granting of such visas is



solely under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Government. There is no U.S. restriction on American citizens traveling to the Soviet Union and many have made such trips in recent years. It is doubtful, however, that a private citizen would be able to obtain additional information on this subject in view of the Government's sustained efforts through the years and repeated Soviet claims that they hold no U.S. prisoners.

Sincerely,

Roland L. Elliott

Mrs. Joseph J. Perrou
409 Center Street
Linwood, Michigan 48634



Gerald R. Ford.

President of the United States.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D. C.
20000

Dear President Ford:

I have never written you, but have written our former President Nixon. I have written many of our Congressmen and Senators also our Representatives. We've asked for help in the release of the ten men who were shot down over the Baltic Sea in 1950. We have every reason to believe that eight were captured alive and are in a Russian prison camp.

One, Joseph Jay Bourassa is my brother. According to all the news released, our next step would be to grant a visa to Mr. Greener and Mr. Noble who have worked so diligently to go to Russia to locate them.

We the survivors have been lied to all these years. We were aware of it but what can the average American



(over)

itizens do about it? We are pleading with you Mr. President as only you can bring about the necessary means of communication for Mr. Grevers and Mr. Noble.

My late father went to his grave not knowing there was a man as generous as Mr. Grevers. My Mother who is 80 years young has every confidence that you will intercede and make all our families happy.

We can exchange cultures with Russia and sell them our wheat etc. but is that where our relations end?

You are a conscientious man and I'm sure you will give this matter your immediate attention. You could be a great President.

My prayers and those of my family are with you and our forgotten prisoners.

Sincerely

Mrs. Joseph Perrou

409 Center St.

Linwood, Michigan.

48634

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

U.S. Flyers

August 20, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: PHILIP BUCHEN *P.*
SUBJECT: Evidence of U. S. Flyers
Downed in 1950

On Thursday, August 18, I had a long telephone conversation with John Milanowski. He now is satisfied that the Federal Government has done all that is reasonably possible to check on the validity of information received by John Noble, a U. S. citizen formerly imprisoned by the Soviet authorities, that certain of the flyers were in fact imprisoned by the Soviet authorities.

I told him that I had thoroughly checked the records and that the information which Noble said was given to him by a fellow prisoner from Germany was not supported, even by the alleged informant.

